

Message Text

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EXDIS

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO SECDEF AND USCINCEUR

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: MARR, MILI, PARM, UK, NATO

SUBJECT: BRITISH DEFENSE REVIEW

REF: LONDON 11493

1. I HAD A BRIEF DISCUSSION TODAY ABOUT THE UK DEFENSE REVIEW WITH WILLIAM RODGERS, MINISTER OF STATE AT THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE. RODGERS ACKNOWLEDGED THAT CHANCELLOR HEALEY SEEMED TO WANT TO INDICATE DURING THE FORTHCOMING ELECTION CAMPAIGN CERTAIN SAVINGS WHICH MIGHT RESULT FROM THE REVIEW. RODGERS THOUGHT, HOWEVER, THAT CABINET SOLIDARITY WOULD PREVENT THIS HAPPENING. HE NOTED THAT FOREIGN SECRETARY CALLAGHAN WAS PARTICULARLY ANXIOUS TO HONOR FULLY THE BRITISH COMMITMENT TO HAVE DIRECT, PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH THE US ON THE DEFENSE REVIEW.

2. RODGERS FORESAW THE LIKELIHOOD THAT TENTATIVE DECISIONS WOULD BE REVIEWED WITH WASHINGTON INITIALLY AT THE OFFICIAL LEVEL. THE VIEWS OF THE US WOULD THEN BE REGISTERED IN FURTHER EXAMINATION OF THE REVIEW IN LONDON. THEREAFTER THE RESULTS WOULD BE PRESENTED TO THE CABINET. AFTER THE CABINET HAD ACTED ON THE REVIEW THERE

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WOULD BE MINISTERIAL CONTACT WITH WASHINGTON.

RODGERS STRESSED THAT IN NO CASE WOULD THE DEFENSE REVIEW
RESULT IN A WEAKENING OF THE BRITISH COMMITMENT TO NATO.
SOHM

NOTE BY OCT: NOT PASSED ABOVE.

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